

Michael F. Easley  
Governor



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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**EASLEY TO MEET WITH HOUSE REPUBLICANS ON BUDGET PROGRESS**

**RALEIGH** -- Gov. Mike Easley announced today that he will meet privately with State House Republicans on Monday, July 23 to discuss the pending budget negotiations. The meeting will take place at 5 p.m., at the Governor's Mansion.

"I am hopeful that we can reach a bipartisan solution," Easley said. "We must work together, both parties, to enact a budget with vision and integrity – a budget that charts a long-range course of progress in education."

"Partisan bickering will not solve the budget crisis or put books in our classrooms. It will not help us attract and keep quality teachers for our students, or bring good jobs and good business for our workers," Easley said.

Easley has called on legislators to pass a budget this year that makes long-range investments in education, including a new pre-kindergarten program for at-risk four-year olds, reduced class size in grades K-3 and a comprehensive compensation package to recruit and retain quality teachers.

Easley has urged legislators to find new revenue to replenish depleted emergency reserves. He has proposed \$250 million in loophole closings and \$400-500 million through a lottery for education.

In addition, Easley has cut \$1 billion in state government spending. He said there is still room to cut additional waste, but he cautioned legislators against making deep cuts in education or impacting services to the state's most vulnerable citizens.